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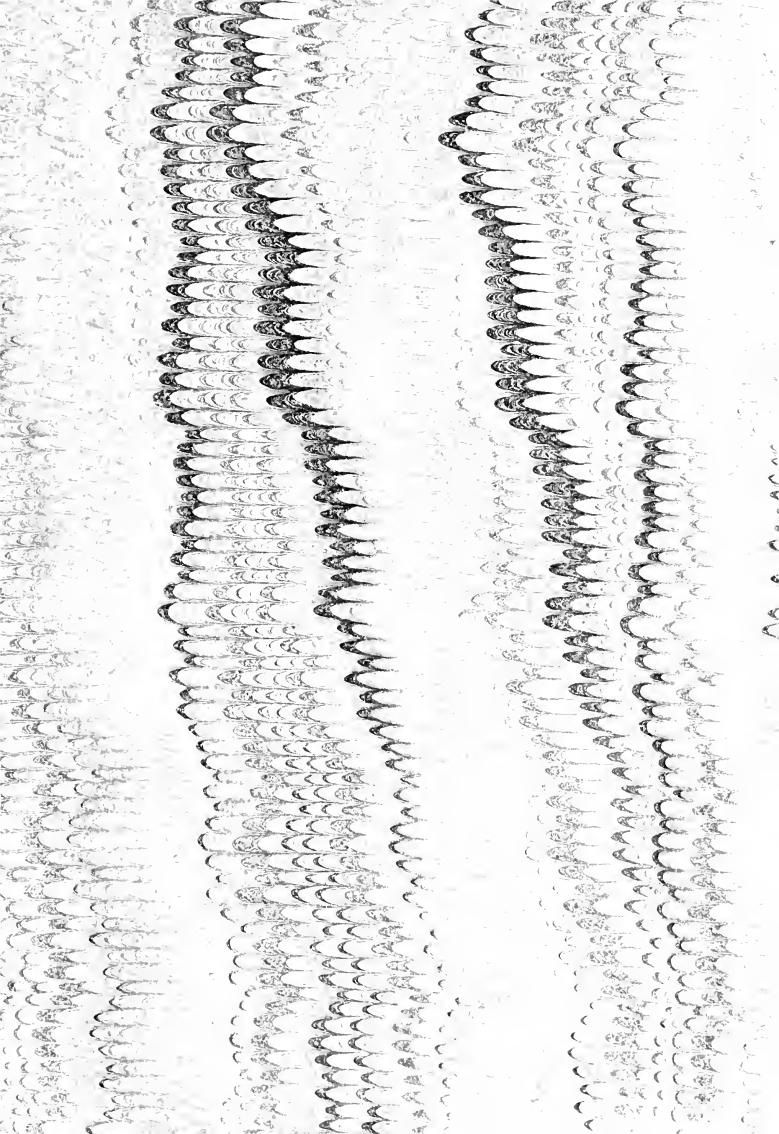
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# JUANITA:

THE STORY OF:

A Young Girl That Ran  
Away From Home.

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BY ROSS LYNDON.

A REFORMED COWBOY.

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1894.



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# JUANITA:

-:THE STORY OF:-

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35

PREFACE.

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It has been said that poetry needs no preface. If it does speak for itself, then no comment can render it explicit. To the old proverb: "Good wine needs no bush." How about logic? If my Pegasus be thought somewhat free for these very n days, I can only say that at times I have found him too wild to stride, and yielding only to the persuasive influence of the riata and a pair of heavy Mexican rowels. Besides I have used the precaution to take out a (poetical) license for the animal, duly signed and tested by that High Muckymuck of the *genus irritabile*, great A

Denver, Colorado, December 22, 1893.

R.

# JUANITA.

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## I.

A Highland lass I sing, Juanita hight;  
But ere across the strings of my old gourd  
The bow I draw, I claim the poet's right,  
And ded'cate these lines to him hath soar'd  
Above all others in his chosen walk,  
Lord Byron, who rhymed well mere table talk.

## II.

For what else is Don Juan? Yet methinks  
The self-same poet says: "Genius is gin,"  
In that case push the can, 'twill take the kinks  
Out of one's mind, and put afflatus in.  
Thy benison, Boccaccio, on me pour,  
In this attempt the feminine mind t' explore.

## III.

If that mysterious bundle of small deceit  
Can be said to have one—yet must I admire  
Th' astonishing art that can emergence meet  
With smiling front, evasion them inspire!  
Still do they gain their point by tears and teasing,  
And intuition serves instead of reason.

IV.

A shallow stream, and yet there's quicksands in it.  
Forbear to launch, unless you know the channel.  
Flowing so tranquil now—and yet next minute  
There may not of your boat be left a panel.  
They *can* be angels and *may* sink so low,  
That to get deeper, vile man has no show!

V.

Sans judgment, logic, still they hesitate not  
To pass on matters of the weightiest sort.  
On love and destiny how deep their thought!  
And yet so easily swayed by men's report.  
But sweet the electric glance of woman's eyes,  
Since the first gales blew over paradise!

VI.

God help us now we've given them the right  
To vote, Mumm's Extra Dry they'll interdict.  
Some Worth we may expect—unhappy sight—  
To be our Czar—View suffering Kansas trick'd  
Of prosperousness by this (and prohibition),  
Rose-in-the mud, mouse-fearing politician!

VII.

But to my tale—The fair Juanita lived  
In a modest cottage that o'erlooked the Platte.  
A maid of sixteen summers, late bereaved  
Of her dear mother, and the gay world that  
Had looked so lovely, now all lonely seemed,  
And different from what she had fondly dreamed.



VIII.

Ah! much does earthly happiness depend  
On kindred ties, yet little we suspect [friend  
That should death's waves bear from us some dear  
How soon the vessel of our hopes were wrecked,  
—O'er all the dreary scene the cactus grows,  
Where late did bloom the lily and wild rose.

IX.

So in the face of my beauteous heroine,  
These two flowers struggled for the mastery;  
No prettier lass in Denver might be seen.  
Her's was the brunette type (no blonde for me),  
Of medium height, and for her shape, oh Venus!  
How thy mouth would have watered, old Silenus!

X.

She was her uncle's pet; one day he said,  
(Though rather brusquely, for he loved to tease),  
"Come hither, girl; what's in thy winsome head?  
Wont tell? Well, blessings on thee, my sweet niece!  
You're all right, even to the very feather  
In your hat—only keep *your* knees together."

XI.

Ah well for her had she but taken to heart  
The kind advice of the well-meaning granger,  
And well for all those frail ones, ere they part  
With prudence to seek dalliance with a stranger.  
Sure if one of those little things I carried,  
I'd keep it to myself until I married.

xii.

Juanita, who, 'til now, the paternal roof  
Had always sheltered, caring naught to roam,  
Began to have ambitious thoughts; a proof  
That she chafed under the restraints of home.  
It was no more congenial, since another  
Had come to share it with her—a step-mother.

xiii.

In fancy had she trod this mortal stage  
Full many a time, and acted glorious parts.  
Brightly the footlights gleamed; her tender age  
Did not prevent her being the Queen of Hearts.  
In some romantic wild, by moonlit sea,  
That's conjured up by maidens, "fancy free."

xiv.

To this end she'd resolved upon a lark,  
All in a nice, quiet way, of course. So when  
One day there came a note from city spark,  
Asking the pleasure of her company again.  
(He was an old admirer) to a dance,  
By return mail his modest wish she grants.

xv.

O waltz, procuress of love's sweetest pleasures,  
That lulls into repose the fair one's bosom,  
As they tread on waxen floors voluptuous measures:  
Forgetting their chastities until they lose 'em.  
"The breast thus publicly resigned to man,  
In private may resist him—if it can"

xvi.

The evening of the ball at last came round,  
 Juanita danced, admired by all beholders.  
 Graceful she polkaed, and in schottische shone,  
 Envied by all the tribe that bare their shoulders.  
 To men's gaze; a trick to make them amorous.  
 Perchance, seeing *all*, they would not be so clamorous

xvii.

Old Burton mentions in his book, a clan  
 Of soldiery, stationed long since at a post,  
 Where "wild in woods the naked savage ran,"  
 The unclad females passed among the host,  
 Who soon grew 'customed to the sight. Absurd  
 As it may sound to us, rapes ne'er occurred.

xviii.

So have I seen a "walker," Sloppy Joe,"  
 Who plies in Denver streets her nightly trade;  
 To her and the keg-draining bum, a foe  
 Is daylight, for what havoc time has made,  
 It shows too clearly; so the one ne'er visits  
 His mates 'til twilight comes; nor the other solicits.

xix.

But what I wished of this "soiled dove" to say,  
 She's dressed in black, the courtesan's shibboleth,  
 But of a cloth so old and thin, one may  
 See easily thro' it, and what lies beneath  
 Her jersey soiled, and general slovenly way,  
 Have earned for her this peculiar sobriquet.

xx.

Grass-widows mingled in the dancing crew,  
 'Tis a product of our modern civilization  
 That's on the increase; they're watching out anew  
 For other mates in the sea of dissipation.  
 So dainty, sweet, to masculine heart's confusion—  
 But seeing them eat destroys half the illusion.

xxi.

Old maids were ranged around, a goodly store,  
 Poor things, you'll always see them at these places.  
 Their stale virginities attract no more,  
 For what the fickle world likes is new faces.  
 And "hashers," too, here met in equal station,  
 Though ill-disguised their greasy occupation.

xxii.

And present to the "guy" who always calls  
 For "something quick and devilish, you know,"  
 Some reel or quickstep of the old-time balls  
 Our grandsires went to. What a holy show  
 Would they seem now; knee breeches, powdered hair,  
 Would fail to captivate our modern fair.

xxiii.

But this back number knows no better, he  
 The story of his younger days relates,  
 What "fun and vinegar," et cetera,  
 He passed through, "afore I left the States,"  
 To wall flower friend, who finds in turn his tongue,  
 And thus they'll chin 'til the last dog is hung.

xxiv.

To supper now our dancers all adjourned.

Juanita's cheeks were flushed, she had enjoyed  
Herself immensely, but her spirits yearned

For something else, when was joy unalloyed?  
Being naturally passionate, worked up by the dance,  
She was now ripe for anything might chance.

xxv.

Ah happy yielding time! if youths but knew

How seld'm that rich opportunity, it would  
Not pass unprofited, when open threw

The nymph her charms, her hot blood in the mood  
They dream of love with the first days of summer,  
Then to them boys, when they're in a yielding humor.

xxvi.

Juanita's gallant, though, was all too tame

The conquest to attempt, girls rightly hate  
Such milksops, the Y. M. C. A's fit game,

Who'd scarcely touch, if brought them on a plate.  
Yet who disdain not (read it in their eyes)  
The "Portugee pump's" gentle exercise.

xxvii.

Juanita's mother had a Spaniard been,

Born in that Southern land, where, as they tell us,  
The women are so pretty, and the men

Such ugly brutes (no wonder then they're jealous.)  
Yet deem her not thence fragile, easily won,  
For well that mother had her duty done.

xxviii.

To make her virtuous she all arts did use,  
Which matrons know so well how to employ.  
"Men were to ask, and women them refuse."

I wonder were our grandmothers so coy.  
Yet some of their slips have been handed down  
To modern days, however they may frown.

xxix.

Whence it appears they granted certain things  
To consummation very near related,  
(Or else it's only one of Dame Rumor's flings)  
Before the marriage rites were celebrated.  
When two went walking neath the harvest moon;  
And round *her* waist one arm went stealing soon.

xxx.

*His* restless fingers working where she lived, [doing!]  
"Oh George," she moans, you don't know what you're  
But why need I go on; you're not deceived  
In thinking George gets that for which he's suing.  
And "Stolen Sweets" have always been in fashion  
Since Eve and Adam first gave way to passion.

xxxi.

But nevertheless the "gay and giddy" fair  
To sport an angel's wrapper are inclined,  
When in swift time they seem to glide on air.  
The "figures forming, in and out they wind."  
Praying the delicious hours to move more slow  
And tingling with delight at the flying fiddle-bow!

xxxii.

Ah, then is heard the muttred innuendo  
Anent the person dancing with a rival,  
Rising above the violin's soft crescendo,  
"The shameless little minx! That blundering devil!"  
When as some swain has stepped upon a trail  
Costing per yard, 'steen dollars at retail.

xxxiii.

The fun was kept up 'til quite a late hour,  
(Early is the more proper word, perhaps).  
The tired Juanita for home took the car,  
It was the "owl train" that the Tramway chaps  
Reserve for such revellers, and the "sports,"  
Whom late play has detained at the resorts.

xxxiv.

Her gallant at the gate dismissed, she rang  
The door-bell, having no night key of her own,  
Which fact to note does give me many a pang,  
Since sad experience well its use has shown  
To gilded youth; though when by "Phillip" blinded,  
The key hole being bald, they fail to find it.

xxxv.

Juanita rang, as I was saying, when  
Uprose the step-dame from her nice warm bed  
Beside her liege, though mad as a wet hen,  
To be so rudely roused; and as she sped,  
Her mind was fully made up, without boasting,  
That she would give Juanita a good roasting.

## xxxvi.

For staying out so late. Opening the door,  
 The "sacred rag" she 'gan to masticate:  
 "This is a pretty time of night, for sure, [straight  
 To be coming home in, Miss. Now you march  
 Inside. Fine company you have found,  
 No better than they should be, I'll be bound."

## xxxvii.

Thus the tirade went on. Juanita stood  
 It just as long as possibly she might.  
 With blazing eyes, until, in sullen mood,  
 She heard: "Begone! here you have no more right."  
 Sudden she turned on her tormentor, cast  
 A look of supreme scorn, then outward passed.

## xxxviii.

Slamming the door behind her. Nevermore  
 She hoped, would its portals echo to her tread.  
 O, pitiful! to be driven from the shore  
 Of refuge, pilotless to cast her lead  
 In unpathed waters—breakers on her bows—  
 All inexperienced sailor as she was.

## xxxix.

Oh would our fond parents might remember  
 That they were young themselves once, played  
 the same  
 Wild pranks that now they chide, ere chill December  
 Had broken up their interest in the game.  
 The smiling May that once they frolicked with,  
 They really think it must have been a myth.



xl.

Juanita banished, paused a moment ere [boiled  
 She bent her course down street. How her blood  
 To think how mean she had been treated where  
 Kindness had reigned, though now by step-dame  
 foiled,  
 And set her wits at work to find a way  
 Of lodging with some friend until next day.

xli.

At last she hit upon a "ladi-fren,"  
 She thought would suit, one quiet and discreet,  
 Who would be glad to have her come and spend  
 The night with her, and who would kindly greet  
 Her, share her sorrows, though the cup was brimming,  
 They can do nothing by themselves—the women.

xlii.

No sooner said than done; she forthwith hied  
 Herself to the friend's residence, situated  
 Not far from Seamon's Gardens, where the pride  
 Of summer "mashers" nightly congregated;  
 The counter-jumpers, that diversion seek,  
 And try to lead fast lives on their five-a-week.

xliii.

The mansion soon was reached. Juanita knocked  
 And was admitted without ceremony.  
 Then followed a fond meeting; the girls talked  
 Until near morn, Juanita's dearest crony  
 She was, beside her that same night had danced,  
 So lost her "beauty sleep" also, it chanced.

xliv.

But slumber and the night's fatigues at last  
O'ercome the friends. Juanita quickly dropt  
Into the arms of Morpheus—lucky guest:

He comes unbidden, but is never stopt  
What fair forms has he pressed, most tempting fruit—  
That is, when no one else was there to do it.

xlv.

Next day her friend, whom we'll call Daisy for

The present, pressed on her so hard to stay  
Until such time, at least, that she had more

Assistance of the future, come what may,  
"She had a friend in Daise, kind as a mother,"  
Whereat the girls most heartily hugged each other.

xlvi.

Juanita did not need much urging, she,

In secret hoped to hear from "father" soon,  
With overtures for her return. If he

Would only take her part as he had done,  
She knew that ere long her he'd reinstate;  
But the overtures came not until too late.

xlvii.

Now Daisy had a cousin come to see her,

Named Clarence; a "Chicargo-bred" young gent.  
Whose tout ensamble smacked somewhat of beer,

And other graces by the Midway lent.  
His flashy speech eked out by stock-pit saws,  
A lady-killer from the heart he was.

xlvi.

He saw Juanita, marked her for his prey,  
For though he never professed to be a sage, he  
Failed to see how she could resist that way  
Of his, so knowing, traveled, spruce and cagy.  
And masking his design with gay deceit,  
He laid a pitfall for her tender feet.

xlix.

Meanwhile the girls went shopping, chaperon'd  
By Clarence, not that they did really need  
A body-guard, but that they found  
Him handy to bear *lingerie* in the street.  
And following out the idea, as it good were  
Ladies oft hang a man's coat in their boudoir.

l.

To frighten burglars from their aim. A case of  
Love stoops to conquer, 'twas with Clarence though  
Albeit he had come within an ace of  
Throwing up the job already, as being too slow  
A way to win Juanita's favor, 'til  
At last came the opportunity in a mill-

li.

Inery shop for which he long had sighed.  
The goods were being sold out by the sheriff.  
In the show-window looking. Nita spied  
Something she wanted, no less thad a pair of  
Fr-nch opera stockings, Lisle thread, warranted:  
And, knowing her slender purse, to Clarence said

lii.

"I wish some one would be so kind as to buy  
 Those hose for me," indicating which she meant.  
 They were alone; Daisy had gone to try  
 Her luck inside, responding to the hint,  
 Clarence replied: "A present you I'll make them,  
 On one condition only, if you'll take them."

liii.

"And what conditions that?" Juanita said.  
 "That you will let me put them on, no more." [sped.  
 "'Tis done!" though when the thoughtless words have  
 And plotting Clarence vanished through the door,  
 Juanita half regretted giving a handle,  
 However slight, that might be worked by scandal.

liv.

To th' prejudice of her fame. She was no prude,  
 To their false modesty was a total stranger  
 Who, shuddering, hands up, would fig-leaf the nude  
 In art, still skittish where there is no danger.  
 Reminding me of the answer the traveler got  
 When he asked the Arkansan why he never "sot"

lv.

His gals at work diggin taters. "Well," drawled he,  
 "Taters got eyes, and my darters hev no——"  
 The sweet swamp angel! innocent is she,  
 Her mother dares not trust her out of doors.  
 She can "tail" and "crib" with any native blackey,  
 But will part with virtue rather than want 'terbaccy."

lvi.

The hose were purchased, Clarence arguing  
 "That was all right," though in her heart the grant-  
 Ee would have liked to back out of her bargain.

But Clarence, "solemn oath and covenant,"  
 That he would tell no one, not even Daisy  
 About it, made her feel the less uneasy.

lvii.

And woman-like, beside, she rather hated  
 To own herself in the wrong; felt confident  
 That in the end his ruse would be defeated.—

One thing she vowed, *no improper liberties went*.  
 In pride of purity high as the Infanta;  
 What happened her you'll learn in the next canto.

# JUANITA;

## CANTO II.

I.

Around me are the Plains. Far-sweeping wold,  
First looked on, seeming wild as an Indian's dream  
Might fancy think that here Old Ocean rolled,  
And the green rises frozen billows deem.  
Here sylvan islands, beauteous flowers are found,  
And gathering winds declare the Cyclone's stamp-  
ing-ground!

II.

Unroll time's map, to that November morn  
Some eight decades ago, when a little band  
Of Regulars, in overalls forlorn,  
Exploring came, by Government command.  
The "pungent, strange perfume of Desert sage"  
Was wafted to them; in in great Nature's page

III.

They read new wonders with the living eye;  
When—thrilling sight! the glorious Rockies burst  
Into their view, the hoary summit high  
Named after Pike, of land marks it the first  
To guide the early pilgrim, and the line  
That "bull-whacked" through in days of "Fifty-nine.

IV.

The adventurous train toiled on; what dismal luck,  
Mid-winter wandering through the trackless waste  
They had, you'll find recorded in Pike's Book.—  
The hasty burial, all signs effaced  
By friends, to guard from timber-wolves' sharp teeth  
The dead—their winding-sheet the white snow-wreath.

V.

Ill-fated Pioneers! that lofty Range  
 Called by the Spanish settlers of those parts  
 Sangre de Cristo---some of these brave hearts  
 Holds in its icy embrace; the Last Change  
 Awaiting with God-given patience meek,  
 When the summons dread shall peal from peak to peak.

VI.

But banish all such mournful thoughts as these  
 When in the saddle for a long day's ride:  
 What pleasure, as your favorite fans the breeze  
 O'er "reach" and mesa, by Sweetwater's side!  
 Yet warily go when nearing a dog-town,  
 Lest horse and rider both go headlong down.

VII.

The prairie-dog—vile, stocky little beast!  
 He holds by right of squatter sovereignty;  
 Among the blue-stem and the buffalo-twist,  
 His watch-towers rise; from which his roving eye  
 Discerns the traveller, doubting his good intention,  
 He quickly dives in his subterranean mansion

VIII.

With a shrill bark of defiance, punctuated  
 By tail-shakes, many as he has time to give.  
 Right well is he by all the ranchmen hated,  
 Who say that without water he can live  
 For months,—yet marvel not my reader dear—  
 Some topers have done without for a year.



ix.

Yet are they changed—the Plains. Long bands of steel  
 Now cross the broad savannahs, that of old  
 Echoed to thunder-tread of Bison; hill  
 And vale were peopled in the rush for gold.  
 And thriving towns now stand (with some on paper)  
 Where the Ute's wicky-up once exhaled blue vapor.

x.

But I have loved them. On my fleet mustang  
 In joy careered o'er the smooth-turfed prairie,  
 Far from the haunts of man—nor felt a pang  
 In the solitude. It was a land of Faery  
 To me, the Meadow-lark its minstrel sweet,  
 Still carolling the morn; the noontide heat

xi.

May not subdue his untaught melody.  
 The joy of living nature has endowed  
 Her creatures with, he tells most thrillingly.  
 Of penetrating timbre, rich and loud,  
 How throb the notes in the thin atmosphere!  
 He feels the electric spark who listens near.

xii.

Time has been, I have traversed all the West  
 In my chosen occupation,—cowboy, scout,—  
 Each had its turn. The spirit of unrest  
 Was dominant then—the fever that will out  
 Among young “bloods,” of manhood's dawn apprised,  
 And drives them on 'til it be exorcised.

xiii.

Wrapped in my blanket I have watched the stars  
Gleam frostily in the Montana sky,  
Beside the Yellowstone, where only jars  
On silence deep the panther's wailing cry.  
—Have plied the Round-up in the Big Horn Valley,  
Where gallant Custer made his famed "Last Rally."

xiv.

Some short weeks post, found myself in Durango,  
With Fred my "pard"—old Comrades there to  
greet us.  
We shot out lights, mixed in the mad fandango,  
And danced with the pretty, black-eyed senoritas.  
Though masked their features by the reboza,  
Love's lightning flashes through, as if to show

xv.

How ill-protected is man's tinder heart  
From their lustrous orbs, by such a gauzy thing  
That fans desire; we seek with ready art  
To complete the romance of the evening.  
For scowl of rival Mexican, who cared?—  
Though his poignard would slip to us—if it dared.

xvi.

Next morning, miles away, our cavalcade  
Were trooping by the sullen Rio Grande,  
Wild, fearless, free, by roving careless made.  
A manly crowd!—perhaps a shade too handy  
With the six-shooter when their "tamarack's on,"  
(And the brand that they throw sticks,) yet to be won

xvii.

With kind words always. I have one in mind  
 (Referring to my pard) for years the darling  
 Rider of the Trail—none better of his kind

Has ever donn'd the "chaps," or roped a yearling.  
 Viewed on his flying bronk'—the bridle reins  
 Firm grasped—you saw, a Centaur of the Plains!

xviii.

And he was on the level. This is plain

From what once came under my observation:  
 The pair of us had landed in Cheyenne

One stormy night, just come from out the Nation.  
 'Twas bitter-cold; the bleak wind blew the snow  
 In flurries through the streets; I was not slow

xix.

In hastening to our rooms,—but Fred preferred  
 To saunter on, and finish his cigar.

He turned the corner, when a voice he heard

At his elbow, in tones soft as the guitar:—  
 "Kind sir, you seem a gentleman by your dress,  
 Have pity on a poor girl in distress.

xx.

"I've walked these streets for hours—and this thin  
 gown

Is no defence against the cruel cold;  
 When I've asked alms, the passers-by would frown

At me, as being one of those who've sold  
 Their virtue—yet God knows I'm innocent,  
 'Tis my misfortune only"—and she leant

xxi.

Her slight form 'gainst my pard's, and sobbed the rest:  
 "You look so kind, I feel that I can trust  
 Myself with you—O, find some sheltering nest  
 For me, where warmth and food are, these I must  
 Have. Now please don't refuse—this help afford  
 And you may stay with me for your reward."

xxii.

And blushing deep, her lovely face she hid  
 While waiting for Fred's answer. Soon it came:  
 "Of Beauty in distress, it shan't be said  
 I ever took advantage, on him shame  
 That would.—Here, Miss, this Eagle pray accept."  
 She took it with a thousand thanks; it kept

xxiii.

Her honor spotless, and relieved her "tight."  
 She lives a happy wife and mother now,  
 And honored, too—though memory of that night  
 Will sometimes bring a shadow to her brow;  
 —The grateful tear unnoticed fall again,  
 For the generous fellow who preserved her then.

xxiv.

But what of Nita, have I then forgot  
 To urge my Queen down Life's toboggan slide?  
 Ah, no—but from my distant, former lot  
 When winds of Memory blow, deep swells the tide  
 Of feeling o'er the shingle; if "gray matter"  
 May be thus styled—the metaphor don't flatter.

xxv.

A pretty fix I left her in, you say;

Well, rather—yet not one inextricable,  
And woman's wit, as usual, won the day.

She went to Clarence, with some little fable,  
Procured the hose—her purpose he ne'er guessed—  
And then a perforator did the rest.

xxvi.

To him they shortly after were returned,

Apparently unchanged—but, narrowly scanned,  
The keen eye de la femme might have discerned

A number of small holes, near where the hand  
Would naturally take hold to draw them on;—  
Disruption threatened now, if this were done.

xxvii.

The hour arrived, when she had pledged to pay,

And with it Clarence, to exact his "pound  
Of flesh"—no, not so much to bear away

He wanted, less would have his wishes crowned.  
When in a certain posture, 'twas his plan  
To throw her off her centre; the divan

xxviii.

Would have prevented injury, and then——

Yes, and then—*honi soit qui maly pense*,  
To bring the foe to terms had easy been.

One shot below the ravelin—the defence  
Would give up garrison. Weak, orthodox  
Man's chief end seems, to ope Pandora's box.

xxix.

That queer contrivance of the Middle Ages,  
 "The "Virgin's Safeguard," made to snugly fit  
 This "box of troubles,"—padlocked too, that pages  
 And others were debarred—argues small wit  
 In the then-gallants, easy to trepan;  
 'Twould not have baffled an American.

xxx.

Quick witted race, fertile in deep-laid scheme!  
 —My gentle reader, picture to yourself  
 Juanita seated,—in creme de le creme  
 Of the latest fashions, Clarence with an elf—  
 Her tiny foot—compressed the ancle nigh—  
 Man's hand before had never been so high.

xxxi.

The unexpected happened—comical  
 The mishap following a too vigorous pull,  
 That laid our Clarence sprawling; in his fall  
 He bore part of his purchase,—and some tulle  
 Came also,—though not meaning to be rude,  
 He reached a little farther than he should.

xxxii.

With feigned surprise, Juanita quickly took  
 The other stocking, drew it partly on,  
 When, lo, it ripped, just as the first had done.  
 "Whoever saw such rotten goods?" She broke  
 The painful silence with, "Now you can't say  
 I kept not faith,—so sorry, but—good-day!"

xxxiii.

So exit Clarence. Harold steps upon the stage,  
The heavy villain of this Melodrame;  
Now in the summer of Life's pilgrimage.—  
Gay Harold, at whose birth the sparrows came,  
And danced in amorous duets all the day,  
While the cock-robin sang a roundelay.

xxxiv.

Cassandras they, foretelling his success,  
In the warfare he should wage against the sex.  
Nature had given him a handsome face,  
Brown hair and ditto eyes. Thereto annex  
A curling black mustache; a frame well-knit  
And personable;—manly grace to fit

xxxv.

A gallant carriage; manners of the kind  
That harmonize with feminine delicacy,  
So easy, deferential and refined;  
His linen always spotless (in their eye  
No mean essential)—and you have engraved  
One over whom the ladies fairly raved.

xxxvi.

That promises attract them; would you use  
The subtlest flattery, like what they wish well.  
Persist—what they yield and what they refuse,  
Still are they glad to be asked for; to dispel  
The ice of new acquaintance, the contact  
Of persons always serves—which don't neglect.

## xxxvii.

Coarse-fibered souls the creature comforts lure;  
 Lull the suspicion of the blue-eyed Swede  
 With cake and brandy, she's apt to "tank youre  
 A-tryin' to do her" else; but oh, to speed  
 Thy suit with the Yellow Girl, that fragrant blossom,  
 Lif' up her spirit with chitlings and possum!

## xxxviii.

These hints experience had him taught, and Ovid,  
 Successful master in the art of love.  
 Tis said of kissing, no one is above it;  
 But this is by-the-by. Past triumphs move  
 The sex's curiousness,—like the luck-penny,  
 They still draw others. Harold's had been many.

## xxxix.

He met Juanita—how? by "personal."  
 Oh, be not shocked, conventional dames, at this  
 Irregular proceeding: the leaves fall  
 In Autumn, Nature's law obeying, Miss  
 Juanita also fell—a victim to  
 Mercurial spirits; pined for something new

## xl.

And Daisy, running her eye through the ads.  
 Found one entirely eligible accord-  
 Ing to her standard, thus aloud she reads:—  
 "Acquaintance wanted, by an English Lord  
 Of a refined brunette---none but adults;  
 Object, a jolly good time, and--results.



xli.

'Twas Harold's coinage. Daisy was a blonde,  
 But she resolved to answer just the same.  
 What did her coloring matter? the beau monde  
 Told her she was good-looking. Common fame  
 Extolled her lineage. Nita, nothing loath,  
 Joins in her wish, so she replies for both.

xlii.

Soon they receive a gentlemanly note,  
 Asking the favor of an early date.  
 'Twas granted,—Martine's the appointed spot.  
 A sign was given, to prevent mistake.  
 The friends arranging, Nita first should meet  
 Him, then each for his preference compete.

xliii.

That evening found our heroine arrayed  
 In conquering robes—don't ask me what she wore;  
 If you *must* know, this vision is portrayed:  
 A lake of rhine-stones; on the silken shore  
 Are paradise aigrettes, brown satin roses;  
 Green velvet are the hills; the land discloses

xliv.

Mountains of jet, and glittering cabachons,  
 Cascades of accordion plaiting; at their base,  
 Begirt with spangles, a fair river runs,  
 Reflecting clouds of chiffon and point-lace.  
 —Kodak these things in miniature, ere you've lost 'em,  
 And you'll have some idea of her costume.

xliv.

Harold, entranced at so much loveliness.

Scarce found his tongue—but this fault was redeem'd  
By his eloquent eyes. Soon both were at their ease,  
And chatting like old friends. The next "set"  
claimed

Them partners, Nita tripping with our "peer"  
To an air she loved—the Spanish Cavalier.

xlvi.

Being a true fin de siecle girl

She must know everything; and Harold's ruse  
Was shortly unmasked, putting him in peril

Of losing what he'd gained. He own'd his use  
Of Truth economical—a case of battery—  
And glossed it over with judicious flattery.

xlvii.

Such favorable impression had he made,

To mollify was easy. Nita failed  
To speak for Daisy, as had been agreed;

By perfidy, alas, so strong assailed.  
Somehow she felt, to Harold tender grown,  
As if she wanted him for hers alone.

xlviii.

And she was humored. At the parting hour,  
The Beach was named as their next rendezvous;  
They separated, soon to meet once more.

Harold's suggestion of a moonlight row  
Was instantly approved. From crowds withdrawn  
Their light skiff o'er Sloan's glassy wave speeds on.

xlix.

The night was beautiful. Twinkling o'erhead  
Shown half the convex-world; the Dipper bright,  
And Jupiter, with the Constellations shed  
Through all Manhattan's walks their dreamy light.  
The Launch's merry crew,—with song and shout  
Of the light-hearted rowers ringing out

i.

Across the waters still; mingling with these  
The sweet strains of the band, combined to form  
A butterfly existence. In deep peace  
With the whole world felt Nita, let it storm  
As't might, an unseen visitant working in her  
The wondrous change.—First Love, the little sinner!

li.

Ah, blissful period! when his radiant torch  
Lights up the unknown region of the soul:  
The far-off Glory-land looms nigh, where march  
Hope's shadowy legions to their rosy goal.  
Time disillusion Youth—the prospects gone.  
No more to enchant as the years roll on.

lii.

No Quaker meeting held they, our fond pair;  
Found much to talk of in the interchange  
Of confidences, while the wine-like air  
Diffused abandon, blowing from the Range.  
Far from the arc light's glare their boat had drifted  
When—how it came about those who are gifted

liii.

In hypnotism answer,—Luna saw  
 Juanita's head pillowed on Harold's breast!  
 Her swimming eyes and half-breathed sighs avow  
 Her conquerer,—and silence tells the rest.  
 The moments pass.—

Upspringing with a start  
 From his embrace, the blushing maid, her heart

liv.

Alarmed at the hour's lateness, in soft tones  
 Regretfully declares they must return  
 To shore—if he would be so kind—at once.  
 And shivering prettily, her seat in the stern  
 Resumes. Harold obeys. Soon on the strand  
 The boat's keel grates, permitting them to land.

lv.

'Twas ended all too soon, the walk that followed.  
 Constrained to say good-bye, Nita recalled  
 All that of Love the witching hours had hallowed,  
 But 'tis a world of partings.—Shakespeare's told  
 Of Juliet's "sweet sorrow" in this strait,  
 Whose yearning soul had but *one* night to wait.

lvi.

Most sad transition! with the morrow came  
 Our heroine's paternal; he had heard  
 Reports (though false we know) wherein to blame  
 She was for sundry lapses; hence inferred  
 She needed governing. In fashion grim,  
 Peremptory, he took her back with him.

lvii.

Resistance had she made, but to what end?—

Her ally Daisy had resentful grown,  
Being tricked out of her fellow. Other friend  
Or resource that might have assistance shown,  
She could not count on, save one diamond,—*that*  
Had since gone to “My Uncle’s” as collat.

lviii.

*Thus* the wherewithal, which paid for the ball-dress

Before described.—What sacrifice too great  
For girlish vanity! That Loveliness

When unadorned’s adorned the most, they state  
Is a poetic fiction, not obeyed, for [played for!  
'Tis known Diamonds are trumps when hearts are

lix.

My Muse shame-faced the sequel now pursues:

On Nita’s home-arrival, she was locked  
Up in her room, to meditate in close

Confinement solitary; and her diet docked  
Of nearly everything but bread-and-water:  
So thought the old gent to subdue his daughter.

lx.

For she had shown some spirit (who would not,

So cavalierly treated) this would pass  
Off though,—so deemed he, when repentance brought

Its sense of duty. Next, at early Mass—  
A devout Catholic—he asked the priest  
To call next day. Confession at the least

lxi.

Could do no harm. This self-same father bore  
 A jovial, not a saintly character;  
 Revered a monk—but loved good-living more.  
 A certain pastime, A. P. A's aver,  
 He held required by man's constitution,  
 (Who must, of course, have proper absolution.)

lxii.

O Vener, thou nipping incitation!—  
 As Montaigne has it; love's thirst to appease,  
 We see around us striving all creation,  
 Does thy power over mortals ever cease?  
 Say, crone of seventy.—This her reply:—  
 "You'll have to ask some one older than I."

lxiii.

Meanwhile the prisoner, of whom we've carolled,  
 Found durance irksome, slow-coach that time was;  
 She thought of many things, but mainly Harold.  
 A knock—in came the priest, all smiles. A pause,  
 Then—"How does Miss Juanita, our fine dancer?"  
 "Quite well, I thank you," came the polite answer.

lxiv.

She knew the father slightly—though the Church  
 Claimed few of her regards, its mummeries  
 Revolting an ingenuous mind. The search-  
 Light of Young independence sorely tries  
 Religion. But while we're digressional,  
 The priest is busy at confessional.

lxv.

Juanita's lips were sealed—a rare mishap.

He tactics changed, unscrupulous in his dealings;  
With forceful arms he drew her on his lap,—

Presumably, to analyze her feelings.

“How dare you, sir!” she cried, with cheeks aflame,  
Struggling to free herself. “Father, for shame!”

lxvi.

The bird hath scaped!—the father's pursiness

Contributing to his defeat, else she had not  
Got off so eas... The fault to redress,

He made profuse apologies, besought  
Her not to tell—it would the Virgin grieve;  
Which promise, when obtained, he took his leave.

lxvii.

One good effect his visit had, the “powers”

Relaxed severity; the Reverend's using  
His influence to that end (the reason's ours).

She might have company—of other's choosing,  
They said,—though this of the “dusky gemman” savored,  
There was a suitor whom the old folks favored.

lxviii.

A miner—, he had struck it rich in Creede,

Where his home was; but the old Campaigner tired  
Of Bachelor's Hall—Lar and Penates need

A woman to look after them. He, fired  
With Nita's beauty, wished her for his mate,  
But she, alas, did not reciprocate.

lxix.

He was not pretty, this old family-friend,  
 His scarred face lilac'd as the poodle-dog's;  
 With anchor-toil his massive frame was bent;  
 A voice that might have pierced the briny's fogs.  
 Good-hearted, though; to Nita presents sent,  
 And though repulsed would never take the hint.

lxx.

He called again—this time prepared to win  
 Or quit the field. A private audience  
 Securing with his lady-love (who'd been  
 Warned not to say him nay), he the events  
 Recounted of a chequered past, wherein  
 The vicissitudes of a miner's life were seen.

lxxi.

Long months, one bacon-rind and Hope his sole  
 Support, in lonely canon, "diggings" muddy;  
 He ran it through from his first prospect-hole  
 To that proud moment when the main ore-body  
 That underlay the elusive "lead" and "seam,"  
 Disclosed its wealth, beyond the wildest dream.

lxxii.

Of Avarice! warmed with his theme he cries,—  
 Pointing a window that looked to the west—  
 "Behind those snow-clad peaks an Eden lies,  
 Embowered in quaking-aspen and pine; caressed  
 By zephyrs—here all nature smiles sublime;  
 O, fly with me, sweet, to this favored clim(b)!"



lxxiii.

But Nita heard him wearily, as one

Wool-gathering in a bible-house; although  
It seems to me that she had better done

To "work" the Reuben for his surplus "dough."  
—She scorned his silver, knowing Governor Waite  
Would shortly sow it broadcast through the State.

lxxiv.

She was too young to marry yet, she told him.

(Her hopes belied this—but the first excuse  
Comes handiest;) the answer over-bowled him—

He had not dreamt his offer she'd refuse.  
Crestfallen, he left.

—Roused from a reverie  
By a brownie of the human family.

lxxv.

Familiarly termed "kid" was Nita not

Long after; tapping timidly at the door  
He entered, and deposed that he had brought

A note from Harold. It contained no more  
Than—"he hoped she was well, not seeing her  
Tendered his services, and so—yours truly."

lxxvi.

In view of what transpired, 'twas a plank

Thrown to the struggling mariner; for lo,  
Th' rejected one was somewhat of a crank,

And carried to le pere "his tale of woe."  
What, such a splendid offer to repel!

The girl was mad—and his displeasure fell

lxxvii.

On her more rigorous than it had erewhile.

Abrided of liberty, permitted now  
To see no one, what wonder that the trial  
Proved to severe—She would tell Harold how  
They'd turned against her. While the twilight's flitting  
(An author's privilege) let's see what she's written.

lxxviii.

"My Only Dear One"—thus the letter ran—

"Your note was welcome as the flowers in May.  
O, how I cried to think, ere I began

This, we can't be together! All the day  
I've worried over it. What in the world,  
Dear, makes me love you as I do?—impearled

lxxix.

"Is your sweet face forever in my heart.

O, that tonight my lips might press upon  
The lips I dearly love. Ah, who shall part

Us, with your arms to shield. I'd rather run  
On Death than live away from you. But know  
That Im in trouble, can not come-and-go.

lxxx.

"(Oh, dear, its just more than a girl can stand)

My parents seek to force me to a match  
That I detest; and here—cruel command!—

Im prisoned till submitting. Let them watch  
Me as they will, to you I'll still be true;  
And now pet, this is what Im going to do—

lxxxi.

"To run off to the one I love the best!

—What you think of my plan, without delay  
Please write me,—but, (since so much I've confessed)

*You must say yes, I'm coming anyway.*

Were they but real!—I send you many kisses.

Nita to her darling Harold."—No P. S. es.

x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

lxxxii.

O, erring woman. To the little god

Her deity, she sacrifices all!

—'Twas this inspired that high-born dame (who trod

In wedded paths—the story's from the Hill,)

To raise a senator, her power to prove;

And "Silver Ed" we owe to woman's love!

lxxxiii.

The letter written, how was she to send it?

The cidevant Mercury was playing near,

And beckoning from the window she extended

The missive—"Would he carry it for her?"

(Bribed with three packs of "coffin nails"—the price.)

"Sure thing he would"—and starts off in a trice.

lxxxiv.

Harold received it safely—kisses too,

Though *these* preferred he in the "original package;"

Wrote back: "Fear not, I'll see you safely through.

Make up at once your necessary baggage;

I'll be on hand tomorrow night."—Then got

A rope ladder, and formed his plot.

lxxxv.

Big with the fate of Nita the night's come.  
 'Twas rather muggy, as the English say,  
 Elopement favoring. In Juanita's home  
 Reigned quietness at ten,—one little ray  
 Of starlight through the utter darkness fell,  
 And seemed to whisper—"Bless you, I won't tell!"

lxxxvi.

The ladder placed, with many soft alarms  
 Nita descended, her heart beating like  
 Sunfish affrighted—fell in Harold's arms.  
 Then joy o'erflowed Convention's hindering dyke.  
 (I needed this word, the rhyme to complete;  
 It's not a good one—but poetic feet

lxxxvii.

Must be observed.) When all was made secure,  
 The lovers fled away into the night  
 To Harold's lodgings. As yet *she* was pure,—  
 Yes, *absolutely* pure, as Pri—to cite  
 A brand of Baking Powder; which invention  
 (Not being paid to puff it) I shan't mention.

lxxxviii.

"This too will pass away." Now Harold leads  
 His fair companion to a terraced pile,  
 His temporary quarters; they must needs  
 Go in, their feelings to compose a while.  
 With pleasing tumults Nita's were oppressed,  
 The sylph that guarded Honor charmed to rest

lxxxix.

Ent'ring the room, she saw with glad surprise  
 A rich collation, Harold's thoughtfulness  
 For her provided; dainty wines on ice.

These were discussed, with piquancy no less  
 Because of the night's doings. 'Twas an hour  
 To balance years of sorrow that might lower.

xc.

Juanita's face was mantling with the joy  
 That woman feels, when her loved one's beside  
 She rose impulsively—"O, you dear boy!"

And with an angel smile—forgot was pride—  
 Her soft arms clung him in a sweet embrace,  
 The while her presence perfumed all the place.

xcī.

A strange light shone in Harold's eyes; he said,  
 "Come rest yourself, my darling, you look wan;"  
 And drew her unresisting to the bed.

Her very soul was his.

The maid undone  
 Grows very weak ere warming—ours, nathless,  
 Gave herself up to perfect happiness.

xcīi.

I purposed here minutely to indite

The fair's sensations, pierced by knightly lance;  
 But 'tis a delicate theme—the details *might*

Prove spicier than the dear public wants. [time,"  
 Yet those will know, who've "been there, many's the  
 Just what to think, without help of this rhyme.

xciii.

They passed the night in transports till gray dawn,  
In "ecstacies too fierce to last" for aye;  
And not till Harold from her side had gone,  
Did Nita miss the orange-blossoms that array  
The usual bride, when Hymen's not turned traitor;  
But 'twas all in the play,—*they* would come later.

xciv.

Some happy weeks fled by—and chivalry  
Itself was Harold still: but Love has wings,  
And so must use them. Inperceptibly  
A change came over him, in many things  
She noted (to say small would be miscasting)  
That showed Cupid's barometer was falling.

xcv.

At opera-bouffé, where Mirth ruled all the scene,  
He smiled not when she did; and when arose  
The lofty diapason,—rapt serene  
Her soul in blissful realms until its close—  
He gave his plaudits not, and thus bereft her  
Of needed sympathy. One day he left her.

xcvi.

We can't be always on the mountain-top:  
Reaction came; Nita's affections were  
Like some drycreek, when all its sources stop.—  
So passion's Cloud-burst had but left in her  
Its barren sands, where lingered yet one flower,—  
That mournful tenderness, her sex's dower.

xcvii.

She's living in a trunk now, as girls say,

In furnished rooms,—the neighborhood's not *chic*;  
Has *many* friends; is drifting the Burnt Way,

Whose cue—Come in, come in! it is to speak;  
Whose creed is (though I won't vouch for its ethics),  
This world—the next one—then the pyrotechnics.

xcviii.

My tale is done.

—The boding nightwinds moan  
With eerie sound at the casement; to Nox tell  
Their ancient rune. The greatest Mystery known  
To Man, Life's secret they perchance reveal!  
Speak, messengers of Æolus!—and close  
I listen. No reply. Then—Adios!

THE END.

## THE COLORADO PILGRIM.

---

'Twas a pilgrim wight in worn-out shoon,  
That "drilled into Denver one afternoon.  
His tattered garments and antique "roof"  
Of a tough experience gave ample proof.  
While the crowd at the Arcade wondering gazed,  
But its "josh" the stranger never fazed.  
"Are you any good?" was all he said.  
A sport who'd a winning made nodded his head.  
Whereat the crowd to the bar adjourned,  
And soon his tale of the traveler learned.  
"Just a month ago,"—thus his story ran,  
"My trip from Salt Lake I began;  
Hopeful I started, but ere the drill ended,  
These brogans with baling wire I mended.  
Walking the ties at midnight when  
Fired off the trucks by the railroad men,  
In the lonely desert where the Book Cliffs rise,  
The awful'st solitude under the skies.  
Not a bird nor coyote in that desolate land,  
And no green thing grows in the shifting sand.  
But I hurried on, though sore afraid.  
Grand Junction the next stop I made.  
The farmers were kind, and never denied  
To give me a "hand-out" when I applied.  
God bless the tender heart of woman!  
She'll ne'er refuse a starving human.  
The shadows of night were falling damp,  
When I struck a deserted mining camp.



Empty the miner's cabin stood,  
The owner had left the place for good.  
To its wild first state the camp resigns,  
Nature's mournful music, the wind in the pines  
The moonbeams glint on rusted steel,  
And faintly the deep shafts reveal.  
Where lies the snow, to Heaven-up-piled,  
Broods the lone Spirit of the Wild;  
And comes at intervals, the wail  
Of timber wolf borne on the gale.  
With spirits depressed I wandered on,  
Until I came to Leadville town.  
Here I met a Relief Camp refugee,  
We traveled together for company.  
A haystack formed our nightly cot,  
Our breakfast at the brook we got,  
I left him 'grafting' by the way,  
And came in on the Santa Fe."  
He closed, and to reward the knave,  
The crowd a "set down," at the Maverick gave.

## L' ALLEGRO IN THE HILLS.

---

Autumns tints with summer blending,  
Send the prairie schooners wending  
Parkward; in wild swale or hollow  
The campfires gleam, and we may follow.  
Mark climbing, the pale blue columbine,  
In its rocky lodge near timber line  
A lovely flower that oft unseen,  
The Oreads weave to crown their queen.  
Now mountain mist the trail enshrouds,  
And peaks commercing with the clouds.  
Grim stony sentinels of Eld,  
That long these argent fields have held  
In fee, with countless "leads" and "seams"  
That haunt the miner in his dreams.  
Thus on until the "schooner" stops  
By the gold-tinted aspen copse.  
Then down where naught the eye descries,  
Save one lone tourist of the ties.  
He greets our hail with nonchalance,  
And gives the usual "song and dance:"  
"Say, Pardner, ye ain't got a quarter handy  
Ye cud let me have. Me name is Sandy;  
Had a job up thar at Hill Top Crossin'  
But quit it—not on account of the bossin'  
And the pay was all right. Then why did I  
leave?  
'Cause I cudn't find anything to breathe!"  
Still onward 'til the goal be won,

Where rolls the rapid Gunnison,  
In lonely grandeur, time-defying.  
Huge boulders in the torrent lying,  
Form many a sheltered little bay  
Where the water-turkey loves to play;  
The chipmunk shy its sole companion.  
The frowning walls of the Black Canon  
Look over, and the eagle's aery shows  
On the beetling pinion's topmost boughs.  
'Mid scenes like these, rarely-trodden ground,  
The tonic of wildness may be found.

---

#### **LINES WRITTEN IN THE OLD CITY CEMETERY.**

---

High art thou placed, O consecrated spot!  
From Maine to Alabama  
In the new world or the old, there exists not  
A grander panorama.

So gazing from thy summit, Taylor spoke,  
None question that decision;  
The mountain background—plains like ocean vast,—  
A glorious vision!

Fit spot for meditation formed; and yet  
Man's greed hath soiled  
Even holy ground; view here the cenotoph  
And tomb despoiled.

Canst read on headstone gray the story brief—  
    Father and son,  
Here sleeping out the Sabbath of the dead,  
    Life's ramble done.

With tired hands folded o'er her aching breast,  
    There rests a mother.  
The harsh world stayed too long her falt'ring steps.  
    Ne'er such another.

Peaceful the scene and quiet all, save note—  
    A coronach impromptu  
Of wild bird flitting o'er some lonely grave;  
    'Tis what we all must come to.

Oppressive thought! that hopes must shortly lie  
    Beneath the furrow.  
My wandering steps the rabbit hears, and darts  
    Into his burrow.

Now twilight's messenger, the night hawk, rises,  
    Chanting a vesper hymn.  
Learn thou the lesson that all nature teaches,  
    And bide thy time.

## THE CATTLEMEN'S YARN.

---

Night on the Little Mussleshell;  
That beaver-haunted stream,  
Where the lone trapper keeps his fearful watch,  
And the sands have a golden gleam. [from  
'Tis the Black-foot reserve. Strong sounds come  
The dim horror of the wood,  
And the Northern lights look coldly down  
On the Selkirk solitude.  
But hark! the hootstroke of a horse!  
The Montana stag in his lair  
Starts from his slumber as the clink of steel  
Rings out on the shuddering air.  
Now he comes into view, and his rider is seen,  
Plying the quirt and spur,  
Fast-galloping, soon is he lost in the darkness,  
Leaving the glen all a stir,  
But scarce has it lapsed into silence again,  
When lo, a fresh tumult is on,  
Two horsemen, fine-mounted, come riding hard  
On the track of the first that had gone!  
Their gun's gripp'd for action. What deed  
had he done,  
Whom vengefully they pursue?  
Overtaken at last, did his life expiate  
For that of the comrade he slew?  
It will never be known. The silent stars  
They guard their secret well. [course  
And the hours of night speed their wonted  
On the banks of the Mussleshell.

## THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL TO THE GREAT RIVER.

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[In the Fall of 1892 the writer formed one of a party of three who went from Denver to Kansas City, where a cabin-boat was built, size 30x10, in which we successfully navigated the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, going as far south as the St. Francis river, Arkansas, where the winter was passed. The "doctor" referred to was a harmless sort of "river pirate" whom we encountered at Cairo, Ill. He was mentally unbalanced, but labored under the delusion that nature had designed him for an author. He held in MSS. quite a number of his performances—regular night-mares, in fact, one novel notably so, entitled "Oscazel." He, too, with Mike his henchman, was floating down the Great River]

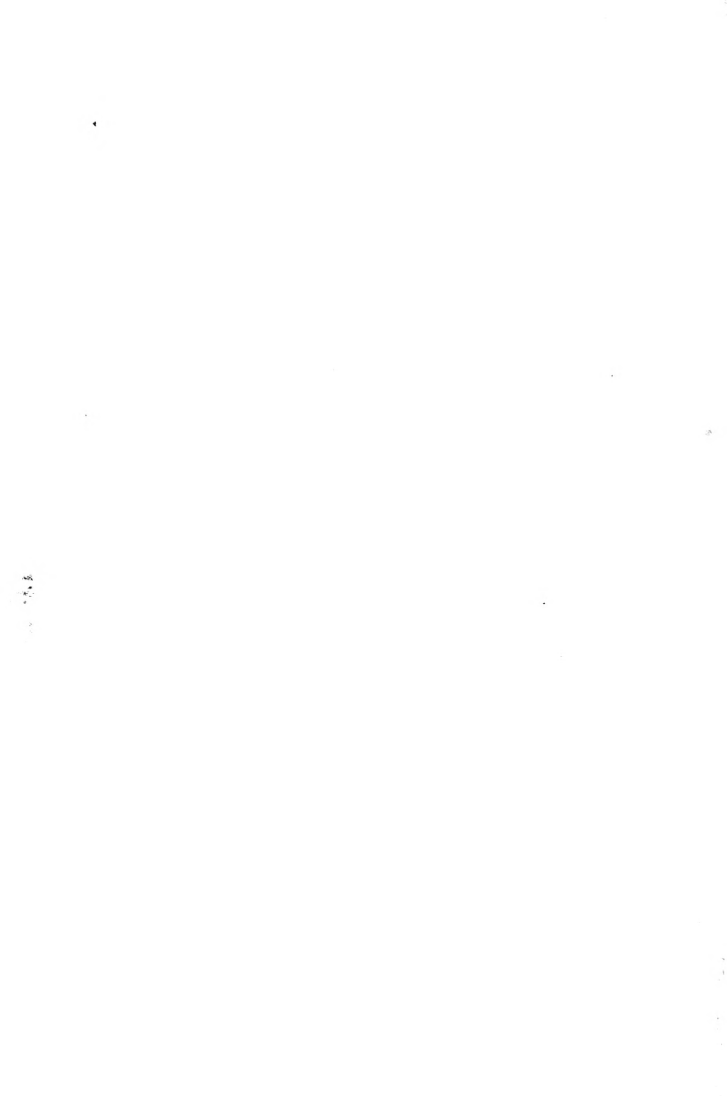
One autumn morn we left K. C.,  
Our starting out was sunny,  
And merrily the time passed on  
While we had luck and money.  
To lead a shanty boatman's life  
Who would not brave the fury  
Of winds and waters wild and rough,  
Upon the old Missouri?  
Had favoring gales ne'er ceased to blow  
Down stream from dawn till set of sun,  
And cheered my discontented mind  
With solace of a good days run;  
Had not the "blues" companioned me  
Through dark hours of wind-bound affliction,—  
Perchance then *thou* wouldst not have earned  
My parting malediction!  
"Fond" recollection still will dwell  
On our bold foraging expeditions, [changed  
When things portable, "murphies" and wheat owners  
The pale moon giving of light a sufficiency.  
How coolly once, at midnight hour,  
Without a pause or tremor,  
We took on board our apples—barreled—  
Like any other steamer!

The barnyard grouse had to roost high,  
And hogs came at their peril nigh.  
Pig-oo-ey through the woods went humming  
When the natives saw our craft a coming.  
Past "tow-head" island, point and bar,  
The wild geese watched us floating.  
Rose many a dismal anserine squawk,  
When our scatter guns began to talk.  
Came from rail-fence or cornfield far,  
The hail through thick Boetian air—  
"Just travelin' about or goin' somewhar?"—  
A Missourian denoting.  
The squirrel from his arboreal lair,  
Barked as he saw our frugal care  
Of walnuts on the roof a-drying;  
For us the paw-paws ripening grew  
(Missouri's banana), 'simmons too.  
And if we cared to "jugging" go  
The "channel cat" and "buffalo"  
Afforded sport and change of fare;  
To gastronomics satisfying.  
Of mammoth size; I mind me well,  
When overboard one day there fell  
A goose's pelt; like bird in air  
'Twas gone ere scarce it touched the water  
From side to side our boat did totter,  
Rocked in the waves the passing "gar"  
Left in his wake (To this I'll swear.)  
And lanternless, those nightly "runs"  
Are still in memory cherished:  
The Grand Tower Rock and its whirling pool  
Where the bridal party perished.

Viewed rightly, this to the groom had been  
A kindly dispensation.  
Who tells what ills awaited him  
Had he lived in the marriage station.  
The "Doctor" comes—inspired loon!  
His "book" it was a "knocker."  
He's either now in his "Island Home"  
Or in Davy Jones' Locker.  
And trusty Mike, all dangers past,  
Which the boatman's life environ,  
The chances are is holding up  
Some Mississippi siren!  
Full sweet the sound at evening's close,  
When the violin's speaking melody rose;  
And "Rolling River," "Old Zip Coon,"  
"Rich Man," "Rye Straw," "Bonnie Doon,"  
"Prettiest little girl in the County, O!"  
"Looked in the glass and found it so,"  
Went echoing o'er the deep.  
Past waving fields of cotton  
We drifted; all we thought on  
To see St. Francis sweep  
Into the parent stream.  
Hurrah! the cane-brakes now uncover  
His waters bluish gleam;—  
Our long, long "float" was over.  
A simple race the swamper folk,  
With taste for story and broad joke.  
Content their humble state to fill,  
And let the world wag as it will.  
They give the interpretation free,  
Of the owl's note heard in the cypress tree,



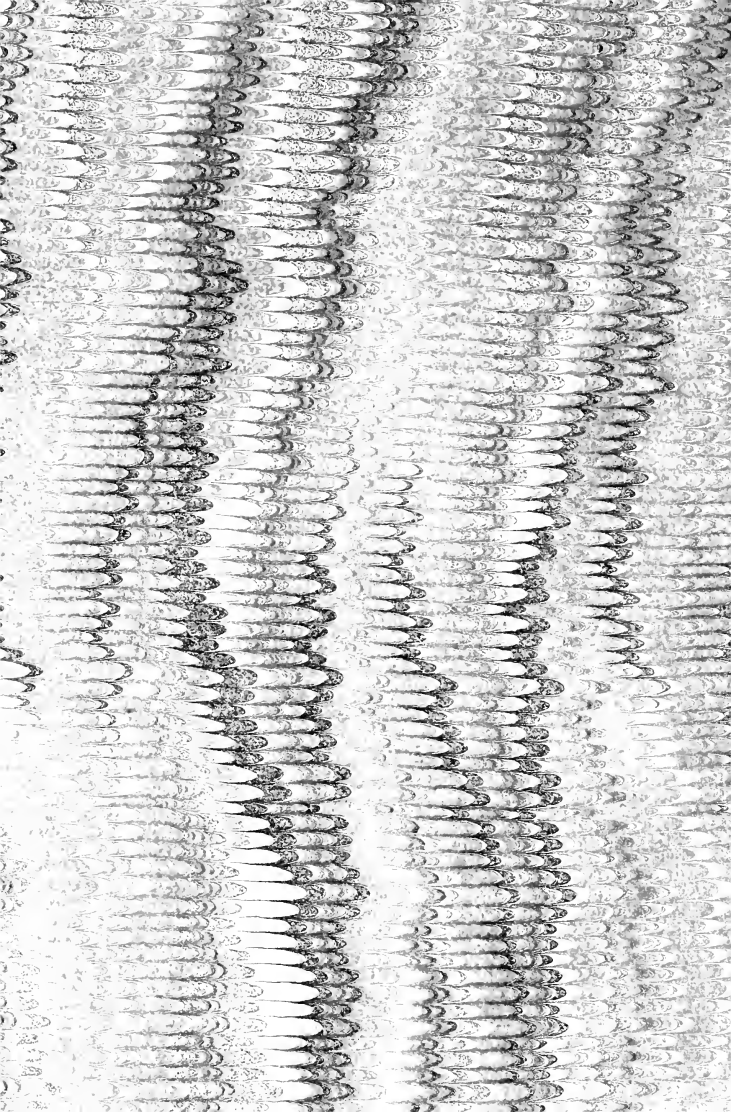
As (and who knows that it be not true)  
    'Who cooks for you! who cooks for you!'"  
No more along thy steep, cut banks  
    Will swiftly glide our vessel;  
No more by willow-crowded shore  
    We'll hear the red bird's whistle.  
No more will anxious thoughts intrude  
    As rocked in our rude slumber,  
To sandbar's side the boat was tied,  
    And shy of spar-pole timber—  
Lashed by November gales she would  
    By "bumps" give timely warning,  
That if our cable gave o'er night  
    Where *we would* be next morning.  
'Tis past—but still will fancy weave  
    Its visions of our trip forever;  
And rapt in that sweet southern clime,  
    Where cold and storms come never—  
'Till our shadowy barque, with her crew of three,  
    Lies moored on Suwanee River!

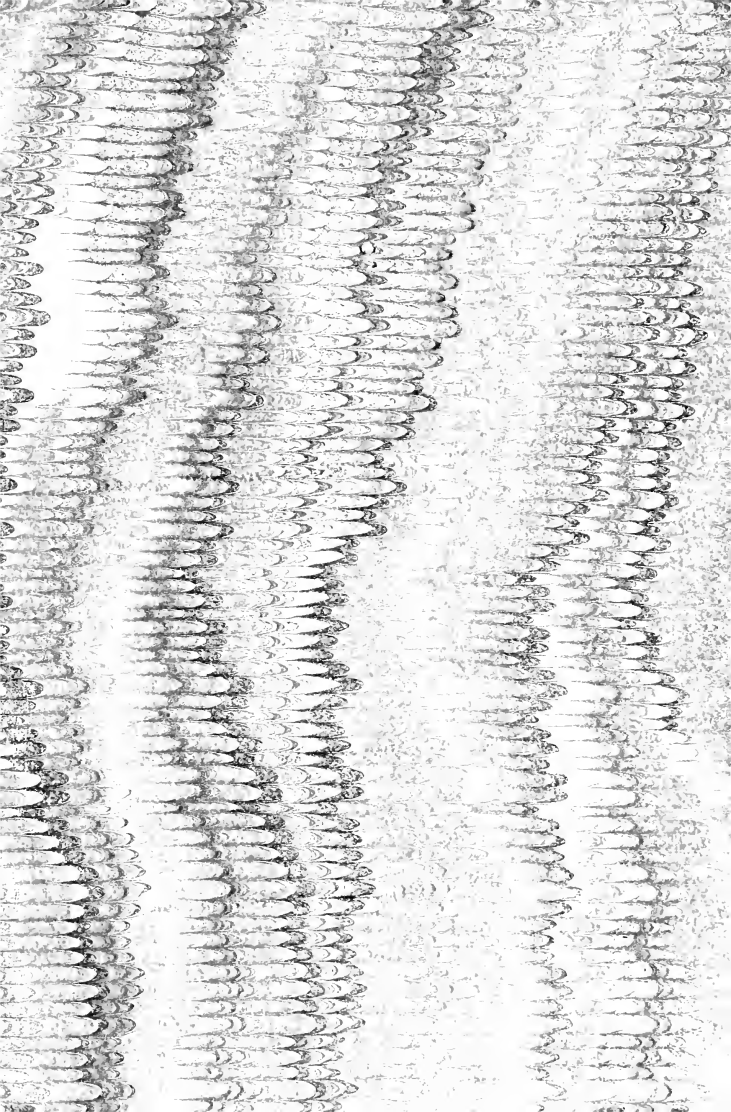












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